

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 1 has been amended in response to the Section 112 rejection. Claim 22 has been cancelled. Withdrawal of the Section 112 rejection is respectfully requested.

Various claims have been amended to remove the word “embodied.”

Claim 1 has been amended in response to the Examiner’s suggestion to use “monolithic” or “one-piece” to better differentiate over the prior art. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 as amended is allowable. Claims 2-18 and 20 depend from claim 1 and are also allowable.

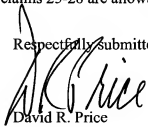
Claim 21 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 24, which has been cancelled. Claims 22 and 23 have also been cancelled. The amendment of claim 21 introduces no new issues for the examiner to consider.

In the last Office action, the Examiner rejected claim 24 as being anticipated by Giandinoto. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Amended claim 21 calls for the component to be a wedge and to be an elastic ring element, the ring element being formed so that it can be compressed causing it to be expanded radially. In Giandinoto, the component is a solid wedge 26, not a ring element or annular form. Also, the wedge 26 of Giandinoto cannot be compressed. When previously addressing claim 24, the Examiner pointed to the spring 36 of Giandinoto as being a ring that can be compressed. The spring 36, however, does not correspond to the claimed component, which is a wedge. The spring 36 merely acts on the wedge 26. Thus, Giandinoto does not teach the component that was previously required by claim 24 and is now required by claim 21.

Therefore, claim 21 and dependent claims 25-28 are allowable.

Respectfully submitted,



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Docket No.: 081276-1063-00
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